

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SAJ-01

SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05

ACDA-07 EB-07 CU-02 STR-04 CIEP-01 COME-00 AGR-05

AGRE-00 /108 W  
----- 109454

R 301525Z SEP 76 ZDK  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9381  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
USMISSION BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USMISSION NATO  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 15451  
FOR EUR/RPE

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR CSCE UR  
SUBJECT: BASKET II : CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

REF: A) STATE 233202, B) MOSCOW 6473

SUMMARY. THERE HAVE BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES SINCE THE SUBMISSION  
OF REF B IN THE QUANTITY, QUALITY AND TIMELINESS OF THE STATISTICS  
AND OTHER COMMERCIAL/ECONOMIC INFORMATION PUBLISHED BY THE USSR.  
THERE HAVE BEEN SOME SMALL IMPROVEMENTS--THE PUBLICATION OF QUARTERLY  
TRADE STATISTICS BY COUNTRY AND THE PROVISION TO US BILATERALLY OF  
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BETTER AGRICULTURAL DATA -- AND PERHAPS OUR OVERALL ASSESSMENT SHOULD

FOCUS ON THE FACT THAT THERE HAS BEEN MOVEMENT RATHER THAN ON THE VERY LONG DISTANCE STILL TO GO TO REACH A WESTERN STANDARD OF ADEQUACY. THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE SHOULD NOT CONTINUE TO TRY TO GET THE SOVIETS TO PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT OUR EXPECTATIONS SHOULD BE REALISTICALLY LIMITED. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY VIEW OF SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH BASKET II PROVISIONS OF CSCE FINAL ACT FOLLOWS, KEYED TO INFORMATION REQUESTED IN PARA 4 OF REF A.

2. STATISTICS CONCERNING PRODUCTION, NATIONAL INCOME, BUDGET, CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTIVITY: THE WELL-KNOWN DIFFICULTIES WITH SOVIET STATISTICS IN THESE AREAS CONTINUE TO EXIST AND WE HAVE SEEN NO CHANGE IN SOVIET MANNER OF REPORTING THEM SINCE HELSINKI. SOVIETS STILL DO NOT INCLUDE OUTPUT FIGURES FOR SOME INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS, INCLUDING NON-FERROUS METALS, SHIPS, AIRCRAFT, MANY CHEMICALS, SOME MACHINES, AS WELL AS MILITARY WEAPONS. STATISTICS ON THE LABOR FORCE IN PARTICULAR INDUSTRIES IS NOT GIVEN IN ANY DETAIL, NOR IS THERE ANY DETAILED INFORMATION ON AVERAGE PAY IN DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES. AND SINCE MANY STATISTICS, ESPECIALLY ON GROWTH, ARE GIVEN AS INDICES, PROBLEMS ARE CREATED BY CHANGES IN BASES AND THE LACK OF DEFINITIONS AND OTHER EXPLANATORY DETAILS. BUDGETARY INFORMATION APPEARS ONLY AS GENERALIZED FIGURES, LACKING DETAILS. WITH REGARD TO TIMELINESS OF PUBLICATION, THE MOST RECENT EDITION OF STATISTICAL HANDBOOK USSR NATIONAL ECONOMY, FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1974, WAS APPROVED FOR PRINTING IN SEPTEMBER 1975.

3. AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION: TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE PUBLICATION OF GENERALLY AVAILABLE PUBLIC INFORMATION ON FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL MATTERS IN THE USSR SINCE CSCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE IS CONTINUING MINOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE PROVISION OF SUCH ECONOMIC INFORMATION ON A BILATERAL BASIS TO USG UNDER THE 1973 US/USSR AGRICULTURAL AGREEMENT. FOR EXAMPLE IN THE FALL OF 1975, IT WAS AGREED THAT ADDITIONAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT DATA WOULD BE FURNISHED TO THE U.S. SIDE, AND THE CURRENT LIST OF US-REQUESTED DATA UNDER THE AGREEMENT HAS NOW REACHED 18 SEPARATE ITEMS. (FOR FULL DETAILS SEE APPENDIX V OF OCT. 1975, JOINT COMMITTEE CONFIDENTIAL

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MEETING ON AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION.) THE MAJOR PROBLEM WITH SOVIET DATA IN THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL AREA, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION BOTH PUBLIC INFORMATION AND THAT WHICH IS FURNISHED US UNDER THE AGREEMENT, IS QUALITATIVE NOT QUANTITATIVE. FURTHER, THE QUALITATIVE DIFFICULTY PERTAINS MAINLY TO TIMELINESS OF DATA RATHER THAN TO ITS RELIABILITY. MOST KREMLINOLOGISTS HAVE NO GREAT QUARREL WITH THE BASIC ACCURACY OF THE MAJORITY OF PUBLISHED STATISTICS.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, WESTERN GOVERNMENTS AND MARKETS REQUIRE CURRENT CROP AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION DATA WHICH THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT YET MADE AVAILABLE WITH SUFFICIENT TIMELINESS. FOR EXAMPLE, PLANTED GRAIN ACREAGE IS NOT PROVIDED TO US UNTIL AUGUST, AND NO OFFICIAL CROP PRODUCTION ESTIMATES ARE RELEASED DURING THE GROWING SEASON. FURTHERMORE, THE USSR HAS NOT ALWAYS SUBMITTED REQUIRED DATA ON SCHEDULE. USDA, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS NOT YET BEEN FURNISHED WITH THE PLANTED GRAIN ACREAGE FIGURES FOR 1976 WHICH WERE DUE IN AUGUST. THE MAJOR DATA DEFICIENCY IS LACK OF CURRENT CROP REPORTS. BUT HERE IT NEEDS TO BE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH WE KNOW THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT CERTAINLY HAS MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE THAN IS RELEASED PUBLICLY OR BILATERALLY, AND THAT THIS INFORMATION WOULD DEFINITELY ASSIST US IN BETTER ESTIMATING THEIR CROPS, IT IS ALSO PROBABLE THAT THE USSR HAS NO RELIABLE CROP REPORTING SYSTEM, SUCH AS THAT IN THE UNITED STATES. IN FACT, SOVIET OFFICIALS HAVE INDICATED THIS TO BE THE CASE ON MANY OCCASIONS. IN ADDITION, OUR EXPECTATIONS FOR CURRENT ACCURATE CROP DATA SHOULD NOT BE FIXED TOO HIGH BECAUSE PRECIPITATION IS ONLY marginally ADEQUATE IN LARGE AREAS OF THE COUNTRY, AND FOR THIS AND OTHER REASONS A HIGH DEGREE OF ERROR IN THEIR FORECASTS IS A NEAR CERTAINTY.

5. FOREIGN TRADE STATISTICS: THE ANNUAL STATISTICAL HANDBOOK ON FOREIGN TRADE IS THE ONLY SOVIET PUBLICATION THAT PROVIDES A COMMODITY AND COUNTRY BREAKDOWN OF THE USSR'S FOREIGN TRADE. UNTIL MAY 1976 IT WAS THE ONLY MEANINGFUL, REGULARLY PUBLISHED STATISTICAL ACCOUNTING OF SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE. QUARTERLY PLAN FULFILLMENT REPORTS APPEARING REGULARLY IN EDONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA AND OTHER JOURNALS AND NEWSPAPERS REPORT ONLY THE PERCENT INCREASE OF TOTAL TRADE TURNOVER --I.E., EXPORTS PLUS IMPORTS -- OVER THE COMPARABLE PERIOD OF THE

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PREVIOUS YEAR. BEGINNING IN MAY 1976 THE USSR BEGAN THE PUBLICATION OF QUARTERLY STATISTICS ON EXPORTS, IMPORTS, AND TRADE TURNOVER WITH INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES AND GROUPS OF COUNTRIES. THIS IS NEW INFORMATION AND APPEARS AS A STATISTICAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE MONTHLY JOURNAL, FOREIGN TRADE. THE NEW QUARTERLY SUPPLEMENT DOES NOT, NOR WAS IT INTENDED TO, PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION ON COMPOSITION OF TRADE BY COMMODITY.

6. A PRELIMINARY STATISTICAL ACCOUNTING OF THE SOVIET ECONOMY -- INCLUDING THE FOREIGN TRADE SECTOR -- APPEARS IN THE ANNUAL PUBLICATION, USSR IN FIGURES. THE TRADE DATA IS SKIMPY, HOWEVER, REPORTING ONLY THE VALUE OF EXPORTS AND IMPORTS BY MAJOR COUNTRY GROUPINGS; THERE ARE NO DATA ON COMMODITIES NOR ON TRADE WITH INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES. STATISTICAL REPORTING ON SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE BY COUNTRY AND

COMMODITY APPEARS REGULARLY IN SERIAL FORM IN SEVERAL OTHER PUBLICATIONS, BUT IT IS BASED ENTIRELY ON THE DATA ALREADY REPORTED IN THE ANNUAL TRADE HANDBOOK.

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ACDA-07 EB-07 CU-02 STR-04 CIEP-01 COME-00 AGR-05

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R 301525Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9382

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMMBASSY BERLIN UNN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 2 MOSCOW 15451

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7. THE COMMODITY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM EMPLOYED BY THE USSR ALLOWS FOR A VERY DETAILED ACCOUNTING OF FOREIGN TRADE AND IS THE STANDARD COMMODITY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM EMPLOYED BY THE CEMA COUNTRIES. THE CONVERSION OF DATA FROM THE SOVIET FORMAT TO SITC OR BTN NOMENCLATURE CAN BE READILY ACCOMPLISHED, BUT COMPARABLE CATEGORIES DO NOT EXIST IN ALL CASES. IN PARCTICE, HOWEVER, IT IS OFTEN IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE

THE DATA MEANINGFUL AND USEFUL BECAUSE OF (A) THE SOVIET  
PENCHANT FOR AGGREGATING THEIR REPORTING IN BROAD, GENERIC  
CATEGORIES, E.G., CRUDE OIL AND OIL PRODUCTS, (B) THE SOVIET  
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PRACTICE OF NOT FULLY REPORTING COMMODITY TRADE BY COUNTRY OF  
ORIGIN OR DESTINATION, AND (C) OFTEN THE COMPLETE OMISSION  
OF REPORTING ON SPECIFIC COMMODITIES EITHER IN TOTAL TRADE OR  
IN TRADE WITH INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES, RESULTING IN UNSPECIA-  
LIZED RESIDUALS WHICH ON OCCASION AMOUNT TO 50 PERCENT OR MORE  
OF THE VALUE OF TRADE WITH A GIVEN COUNTRY. (FYI, SEE MOSCOW  
A-237 AND A-265).

8. LAWS AND REGULATIONS CONCERNING FOREIGN TRADE: THE  
SOVIETS PERIODICALLY PUBLISH COMPENDIA OF THEIR FOREIGN TRADE  
LAWS AND REGULATIONS. COPIES OF LATEST EDITION (AT THAT TIME)  
WERE GIVEN TO JOINT SEMINAR ON LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
ASPECTS OF US/USSR TRADE IN DECEMBER 1975. WHILE THIS PUB-  
LICATION MAY NOT BE COMPREHENSIVE, IT IS, IN ANY CASE,  
LARGELY IRRELEVANT SINCE THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS  
SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGED IN FOREIGN TRADE ARE ADMINISTRA-  
TIVE, NOT LEGAL, IN NATURE

9. INFORMATION ALLOWING FORECASTS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
ECONOMY TO ASSIST IN TRADE PROMOTION: THE SOVIET UNION HAS  
ALREADY PUBLISHED AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF KOSYGIN'S SPEECH  
TO THE 25TH CPSU CONGRESS AND THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S  
DRAFT "GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ECON-  
OMY OF THE USSR FOR 1976-1980." THESE PUBLICATIONS CONTAIN  
USEFUL INDICATIONS OF DIRECTIONS THE SOVIET ECONOMY WILL TAKE  
AND WILL BE FOLLOWED BY FURTHER PUBLISHED DATA ON THE PLAN.

10. AS SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR MARKET RESEARCH, HOWEVER,  
THE VALUE OF THESE PUBLICATIONS IS LIMITED, SINCE THEY DO  
NOT INDICATE THE AREAS WHERE THE SOVIETS WILL TURN TO FOREIGN  
FIRMS FOR HELP IN FULFILLING PLAN OBJECTIVES. PART OF THE  
REASON FOR THIS OMISSION IS JUST NATURAL CAUTELINESS IN NOT  
WISHING TO TIP THEIR HAND TO POTENTIAL FOREIGN SUPPLIERS.  
MORE IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, IS THE FACT THAT FOREIGN TRADE IS  
NOT EASILY SUBJECT TO LONG-TERM PLANNING BECAUSE, AMONG OTHER  
THINGS, EXPORT EARNINGS AND WESTERN CREDIT AVAILABILITY ARE  
SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY FACTORS BEYOND GOSPLAN'S CONTROL.  
AS NOTED ABOVE (PARA 3 AND 4) THE USSR IS DOING SOMEWHAT  
BETTER AT PROVIDING US AGRICULTURAL DATA. IN OUR VIEW,  
HOWEVER, THIS DEVELOPMENT IS RELATED TO OUR BILATERAL AGREE-  
MENTS RATHER THAN TO CSCE, AND EVEN THIS IMPROVED DATA FLOW  
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CANNOT BE JUDGED ADEQUATE FOR U.S. (OR WORLD) INFORMATION  
NEEDS ABOUT THE SOVIET AGRICULTURAL SCENE.

11. OTHER INFORMATION TO HELP BUSINESSMEN IN COMMERCIAL CONTACTS: THE USSR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY PUBLISHES AN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE HANDBOOK DETAILING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FOREIGN TRADING ORGANIZATIONS WITHOUT ANY PERSONNEL INFORMATION. WITH SOME ASSISTANCE FROM THE SOVIET SIDE OF THE ORGANIZATION, THE US/USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL PUBLISHED A DIRECTORY "WHO'S WHO IN SOVIET TRADE" IN LATE 1974 AND UP-DATED IT IN JULY 1975. THIS PUBLICATION CONTAINS USEFUL BUT SHORT LISTS OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND FOREIGN TRADE ORGANIZATION EXECUTIVES AND INDICATIONS OF THEIR AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY. (FYI. UNFORTUNATELY, EVEN AT PUBLICATION IT WAS NEITHER COMPREHENSIVE NOR COMPLETELY ACCURATE. END FYI.) ON THE OTHER HAND, IN ITS MONTHLY JOURNAL FOREIGN TRADE THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE HAS BEEN PUBLISHING REGULARLY FOR SEVERAL YEARS USEFUL BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND PHOTOS OF SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE OFFICIALS, COUNSELLORS FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AT SOVIET EMBASSIES ABROAD, AND HEADS OF SOVIET-OWNED OR JOINTLY-OWNED COMPANIES ABROAD. THE JOURNAL'S "ANNOUNCEMENTS" SECTION AT THE END OF THE PUBLICATION INCLUDES INFORMATION ON PERSONNEL CHANGES AS WELL AS CHANGES IN AUTHORIZATIONS FOR SIGNING FOREIGN TRADE TRANSACTIONS. THESE DATA WOULD PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PERIODIC LISTING IN A FORM MORE USEFUL TO BUSINESSMEN; UNFORTUNATELY, THE SOVIETS DO NOT PRODUCE SUCH A PUBLICATION.

12. CONCLUSIONS. EXCEPT FOR THE QUARTERLY TRADE STATISTICS BY COUNTRY (PARA 5 ABOVE), WE ARE AWARE OF NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES SINCE THE SUBMISSION OF REF B IN THE QUANTITY, QUALITY OR TIMELINESS OF STATISTICS OR OTHER COMMERCIAL/ECONOMIC INFORMATION BEING PUBLISHED BY THE USSR. WE SEE NO INDICATIONS THAT THE USSR IS MOVING TOWARD PUBLISHING STATISTICAL INFORMATION WITH THE DEGREE OF DETAIL CONSIDERED STANDARD IN THE WEST, AND CERTAINLY MUCH INFORMATION OF VALUE TO "ADEQUATE MARKET ANALYSIS" -- BY WESTERN STANDARDS -- WILL REMAIN UNOBTAINABLE. FOR EXAMPLE, SOVIET MINISTRIES ROUTINELY DO NOT REPLY TO EMBASSY REQUESTS FOR WHAT WE CONSIDER TO BE NON-SENSITIVE STATISTICAL INFORMATION IN CONNECTION WITH  
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WORLD COMMODITY SURVEYS THUS WE MUST AGAIN CONCLUDE THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO PERCEPTIBLE CHANGE IN THE ESTABLISHED SOVIET VIEW THAT, ON THE WHOLE, STATISTICAL INFORMATION IN GREATER DETAIL THAN GENERAL, AGGREGATE STATISTICS REPRESENTS SENSITIVE INFORMATION NOT TO BE DIVULGED, ESPECIALLY TO FOREIGNERS.

13. THE FACT THAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN SLOW AND LIMITED DOES NOT  
MEAN THAT WE SHOULD NOT TRY TO GET THE SOVIETS TO PROVIDE  
MORE STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON A MORE TIMELY BASIS. IT  
DOES MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT OUR EXPECTATIONS SHOULD BE REAL-  
ISTICALLY LIMITED ONES AND THAT OUR APPROACHES SHOULD BE  
CAREFULLY CHOSEN.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** US CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS, COMMITTEES, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), INFORMATION CONTROL, BASKET II  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 SEP 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ullricre  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976MOSCOW15451  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760369-1028  
**From:** MOSCOW  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t1976093/aaaaabvx.tel  
**Line Count:** 339  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 7  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 STATE 233202, 76 MOSCOW 6473  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ullricre  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <03 AUG 2004 by ullricre>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** BASKET II : CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION  
**TAGS:** PFOR, UR, CSCE  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006